

GUIDEBOOK



Three Banded Anemone Fish - Found only in the Marshall Islands

MARSHALL ISLANDS VISITORS AUTHORITY

P.O. BOX 5 • MAJURO, MARSHALL ISLANDS MH 96960

Tel.: (692) 625 6482 Fax: (692) 625 6771

www.visitmarshallislands.com tourism@ntamar.net



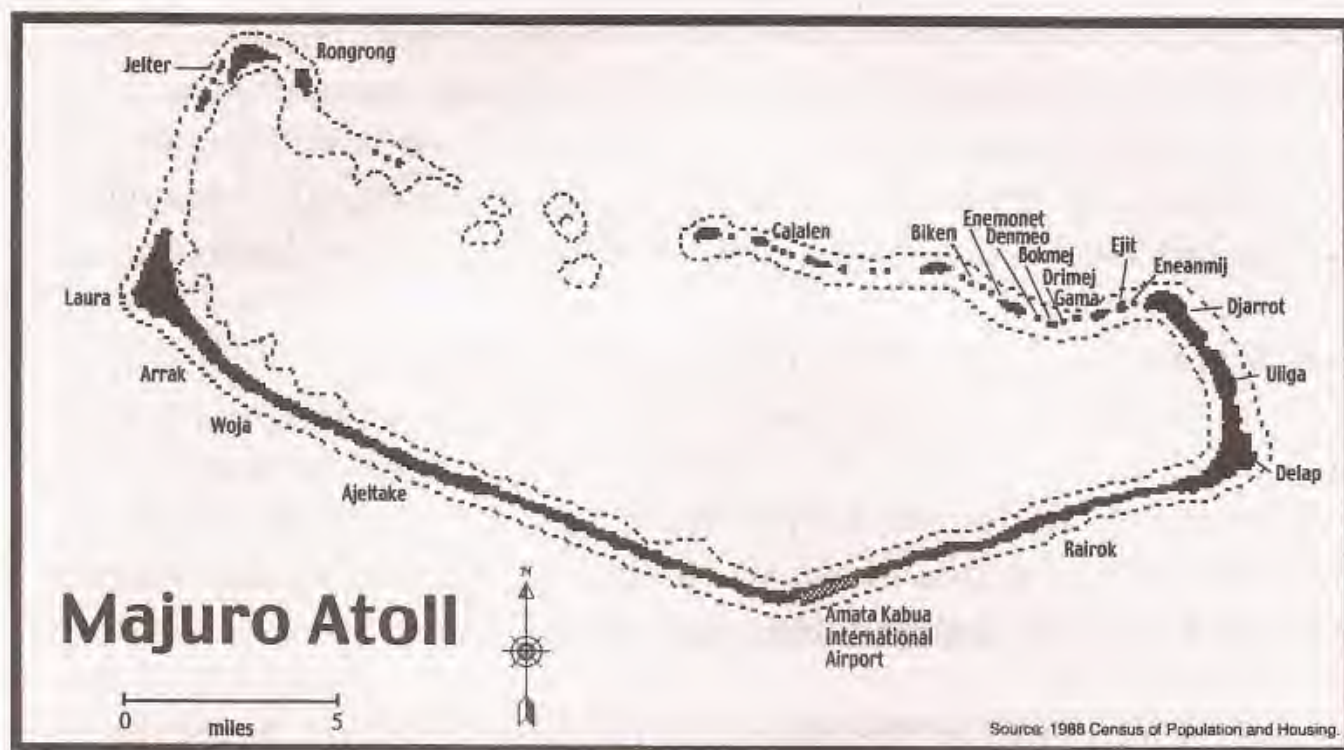


TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| GENERAL INFORMATION | 3 |
| USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS | 3 |
| GETTING AROUND | 3 |
| ACCOMMODATION | 4 |
| SCUBA DIVING | 6 |
| SPORTSFISHING | 7 |
| WORLD WAR II | 8 |
| RESTAURANTS | 9 |
| BARS AND NIGHTCLUBS | 9 |
| CULTURE AND HISTORY | 9 |
| GIFTS AND SOUVENIR SHOPPING | 13 |
| WHAT TO SEE AND DO | 14 |
| PUBLIC HOLIDAYS | 16 |
| INTERNET ACCESS | 16 |

Welcome to Majuro Atoll, capital of the Marshall Islands. For our first time visitors, we say *IAKWE!* This is our native word of greeting and can mean either hello, goodbye, or love (literally, it is translated as "you are a rainbow"). For those of you who have visited our atolls previously, we say *BAR IAKWE* or hello again!

The Marshalls is one of the most unique places in the world to visit, made up of 29 coral atolls and 5 single islands spread out over an exclusive economic zone of nearly 1 million square miles (one of the largest in the Pacific!). The Marshalls is one of only four atoll nations in the world and is also one of the world's youngest nations, independent since just 1986.

As the capital atoll of the Marshall Islands, Majuro houses the central government, most of the country's businesses, and an estimated 50% of the country's population. Indeed, this is the country's most developed and urban atoll.

Nonetheless, Majuro still offers visitors a glimpse of what the rest of the country is like. While you are here, we encourage you to take a little time to really see the Marshall Islands. Do a bit of exploring-take a drive out to Laura Village (on the far western end of the island), book a picnic trip to one of our small islands across the lagoon, or take a scuba diving excursion to see our rich underwater world. If you have a few extra days, visit one of our other atolls, like Arno, Jaluit, Mili or Likiep, where small accommodation facilities are available.

If you have any specific questions which are not addressed in this guidebook, please call us during normal working hours from Monday through Friday (telephone 625-6482). Or you can visit our office in Delap, next door to the Marshalls Energy Company headquarters.

Kommool tata (thank you very much) and enjoy your stay

General Information

- Location: between 4(and 19(North latitude and 160(and 175(East longitude.
- Capital: Majuro Atoll
- Land Area: 70 square miles (171 square kilometers)
- Political Status: self-governing democracy in free association with the U.S.
- Official Language: Marshallese/English
- Currency: U.S. dollar
- Total Population: 52,000 (1999 Census)
- Time Zone: the Marshall Islands are 12 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time.
- Medical Facilities: Majuro has one private clinic and one public hospital. Most outer islands have medical dispensaries.
- Communications: satellite, telex, telephone, cable, facsimile and electronic mail are available on Majuro. Communications with outer islands by radio. Jaluit Atoll and Bikini Atoll have satellite phone/fax systems available.
- Postal Service: the Marshalls use the U.S. postal service and have two post offices on Majuro and one on Ebeye.
- Credit cards: Visa, Mastercard, and American Express accepted by most major businesses.
- Dress/attire: island style/casual. Cool, loose fitting clothes accepted in most places. Sunscreen recommended. Swimsuits, short shorts/skirts should not be worn in urban areas.
- Tipping: optional.

Useful Telephone Numbers

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Marshall Is. Visitors Authority | 625-6482 |
| Continental Micronesia | 625-3209/625-3052/247-3092 |
| Aloha Airlines | 247-8093/247-8094/625-7090 |
| Air Marshall Islands | 625-3733/625-3731/625-3735 |
| Alele Museum and Library | 625-3372 |
| Overseas Operator | dial "0" |
| Directory/Information | 625-1411 |
| Customs, Revenue, Taxation | 625-5196 |
| Immigration | 625-8633 |
| Main Police Station | 625-8666 |
| Hospital Emergency Room | 625-4144 |
| Weather Report | 625-3076 |

Immigration Requirements

Visas are not required for any visitors staying for less than 30 days. Visitor permits are issued upon arrival. Visitors must have a valid passport and must possess an onward air or sea ticket.

Getting Around on Majuro

Taxis are a cheap way to travel around Majuro, with prices ranging from \$.50 to \$20.00 depending on distance – BE WARNED: THERE ARE NO CURRENT REGULATIONS FOR TAXI PRICES

ON MAJURO. Here in the islands, we use a ride-sharing taxi system, which means that you can stop a taxi already carrying passengers. And for \$2.50 each way you can hop on board the island-wide shuttle bus service, which departs every other hour from the RRE parking lot (located on map as "R.R.E.").

Rental Car Companies on Majuro Atoll offer a variety of vehicle types including sedans, trucks, and minivans. Companies and telephone numbers are as follows:

| | | | |
|----------------------------|----------|--------------------------|----------|
| RRE Hotel Car Rental | 625-5131 | Pacific Wheels | 625-7497 |
| MGAS Rentals | 625-6559 | Elm Motors | 625-3466 |
| G & L Rental Cars | 625-3965 | DAR Car Rentals | 625-3174 |
| AA Car Rental | 625-2828 | Majuro Motors, Inc. | 625-4422 |

Accommodations

MAJURO HOTELS

Hotel Robert Reimers Tel: 625-5131 Fax: 625-3505

rreadmin@ntamar.net www.rreinc.com

Facilities: 39 air-conditioned rooms, beachside thatched bungalows, with restaurant, bar, meeting hut, diving and fishing tours, car rental, gift shop and airport shuttle

Rates: \$75-150, Visa/MC

Outrigger Marshall Islands Resort Tel: 625-2525 Fax: 625-2555

omrhtl@ntamar.net www.outrigger.com

Facilities: 140 first-class air-conditioned rooms with 15 suites, swimming pool, tennis court, conference room, restaurant, bar, beachfront, fitness room, gift shop, airport shuttle, fax service.

Rates: \$130-235, Visa/MC, JCB, AmEx.

Hotel Marshall Islands Tel: 625-3000 Fax: 625-3136 journal@ntamar.net

Facilities: 10 air-conditioned rooms, restaurant, bar, airport shuttle, located downtown Rates: \$67-80 Visa/MC, JCB, and Diners

Flame Tree Backpacker's Hostel Tel: 625-4229 Fax: 625-3136 journal@ntamar.net

Facilities: 21 rooms, restaurant, bar, airport shuttle, located downtown (coming soon: Kidenen Island). Rates: \$25 Visa/MC, JCB, and Diners

Long Island Hotel Tel: 247-6789 Fax: 247-6780 lihotel@ntamar.net

Facilities: 32 air-conditioned rooms, business center, airport shuttle, restaurant, bar and gift shop. Rates: \$62.40 single, \$85.08 double, Luxury Lagoon View, \$102.36 (tax included). Visa/MC

EBEYE HOTELS

Anrohasa Hotel Tel: 329-3161 Fax: 329-3248

Facilities: 22 air-conditioned rooms, two suites, bar, diving and fishing excursions.

Rates: \$93-156, Visa/MC

The Place Hotel Tel: 329-3210 Fax: 329-3292

Facilities: 6 air-conditioned rooms. Rates: \$52-57, no credit cards.

Outer Island Excursions

Guaranteed relaxation. You haven't fully experienced the Marshall Islands until you've thrown yourself back in time on one of the 24 atolls accessible by boat and/or plane. Treat yourself to a day, several days, a week, or an entire month of the most pristine diving, abundant fishing opportunities, WWII exploration, and blissful seasons in the sun. Accommodations range from bed & breakfast to small air-conditioned island resorts to traditional thatched bungalows to the most basic camping facilities.

How to Get There:

| | | |
|-----------|----------------------------|--------------------|
| By air... | Air Marshall Islands | 625-3731/3733/3735 |
| By sea... | RRE | 625-3250 |
| | Marshall's Dive Adventures | 625-3483 |
| | Bako Divers | 625-2525 |
| | Yokwe Divers | 625-2525 |
| | MV Oleanda | 625-3122 |

OUTER ISLAND ACCOMMODATIONS

Rongelap Expeditions (Rongelap Atoll) Tel: 625-3122 Fax: 625-3348

rongexp@ntamar.net Custom Packages available.

Facilities: Rongelap Field Station (temporary) with three VIP Rooms with necessary amenities.

Trailers: Three, able to accommodate up to four persons per room.

Bikini Dive Resort (Bikini Atoll) Tel: 625-3250 Fax: 625-3505

saratoga@ntamar.net www.bikiniatoll.com

Facilities: 7 rooms, world-class diving. Rates: part of package, Visa/MC

Likiep Plantation Haus Resort (Likiep Atoll) Tel: 625-2229 Fax 625-5594

likiephaus@yahoo.com

Facilities: 12 rooms (double and single), kitchen, land/lagoon tours, snorkeling, diving. Rates: \$75 single, \$85 double (with or without a/c). No credit cards.

Jawoj Hotel (Jaluit Atoll) Tel: 625-3829 Fax: 625-3397 meccorp@ntamar.net

Facilities: 4 rooms, full-kitchen/bath, air conditioned, airport transfer, laundry facilities, tv/vcr.

Rates: \$50, no credit cards

Arno, Arno Bed & Breakfast (Arno Atoll) Tel: 625-3250 ext. 372

rreadmin@ntamar.net ATTN: Francis Teruo Reimers

Facilities: master bedroom, large living room, full kitchen, furniture, bath, 24 hour water and electricity. Take your own food, cook with the help of caretaker Isao. Rates: \$25 per person per night.

Enedrik Island Camping Grounds (Arno Atoll) Tel: 625-3250 ext. 372

rreadmin@ntamar.net ATTN: Francis Reimers

Facilities: camping grounds, water, cook house, beachfront. Take your own food, cook with the help of caretaker Simon. Rates: \$10 per person per night.

Arno Pearl Farm and Bungalows (Arno Atoll) Tel: 625-3250 Fax: 625-3505

rreadmin@ntamar.net

Facilities: 2 beach bungalows on black pearl farm island

Rates: custom packages designed, Visa/MC

Wau Cottages (Wau Island, Mili) Tel: 625-3250 Fax: 625-3505

rreadmin@ntamar.net

Facilities: 9 beach cottages on giant clam farm island

Rates: custom packages designed, Visa/MC

Scuba Diving

Scuba diving is one of the Marshalls' premier attractions. With excellent underwater visibility, year-round warm weather, 250 species of hard and soft coral and over 1,000 species of fish, it's no wonder the Marshalls' are gaining popularity as a great scuba diving destination.

Divers can enjoy steep drop-offs, coral pinnacles, channels, and reef points. Certain dive spots are abundant with fast moving pelagic schools, while others boast rich varieties of hard or soft coral.

In addition to marine life, there are a number of historically significant diving wrecks in our lagoons. The USS Saratoga, a US Naval Aircraft Carrier which fought in WWII, is the largest diveable wreck and the only diveable aircraft carrier in the world. Larger than the Titanic, the USS Saratoga sits on the bottom of Bikini Atoll lagoon. Also on Bikini, you'll find the Battleship HIJMS Nagato, the flagship of the Imperial Japanese Navy, which led the attack on Pearl Harbor (check out www.bikiniatoll.com).

On Kwajalein atoll, there is the Prinz Eugen, a German Heavy Cruiser, which fought alongside the Battleship Bismarck. Launched by Adolf Hitler, this ship now sits upside down in the shallows of Kwajalein lagoon.

Other lagoons, such as Jaluit, Mili, Wotje and Maloelap, have many WWII wrecks which have yet to be discovered! Personalized itineraries to the outer atolls are available to those seeking the truly unexplored.

Marshalls Dive Adventures is the RMI's original dive/tour operator, offering diving, snorkeling and sightseeing tours on Majuro, Arno, Mili, Jaluit and Bikini Atolls. MDA also offers short diving courses for beginners. Call 625-3483 or 625-3250 and ask for Satoshi Yoshii. www.rreinc.com marshall@ntamar.net rreadmin@ntamar.net

Bako Divers is offering scuba, snorkeling, and lagoon tours in Majuro and Arno Atolls. Bako Divers also offers short diving courses for beginners. Call Jerry Ross at 247-7254 or at the Outrigger front desk (room 140). www.bakodivers.com jerryr@ntamar.net

Marshall Islands Aquatics also offers dive tours in and around Majuro, in addition to guided WWII historic tours to the outer atolls. Call Matt Holly at 625-3669 or email aquamar@ntamar.net

Bikini Atoll Divers offers week-long dive tours on Bikini's nuclear fleet. Call 625-4265/3177 or email: saratoga@ntamar.net.

Yokwe Divers RMI's newest dive/tour operator, offers scuba diving, snorkeling and lagoon tours in Majuro, Arno, and Jaluit. Also offers scuba training and certification in Basic Open Water and Divemaster. Call 625-2525, Ext #142, 625-1796 (C). hoddy63@hotmail.com

Sportsfishing

With its 29 coral atolls spread out over 750,000 square miles of tropical Pacific Ocean, the Marshall Islands is literally one of the fishiest countries on earth!

Fishing Techniques The Marshall Islands offers an incredible array of fishing opportunities within the lagoons, on the reef flats, and in the open ocean. Anglers can enjoy flyfishing, jigging and bottom fishing, trolling, casting/whipping, and more.

Fishing Areas All 29 atolls in the Marshalls offer excellent fishing. From the capital, Majuro Atoll, anglers can easily venture out to neighboring Arno atoll by boat or to other atolls via Air Marshall Islands, the domestic carrier.

Fishing Season Wind and sea conditions are most favorable during the May-October period.

Species The RMI is blessed with over 1,000 species of fish (860 inshore/reef, 7 freshwater/brackish, 67 open water and 125 deep sea fish).

Charter Boats Boats vary in type and size (ranging from about 25 to 45 feet). Charters are available for fishing, lagoon cruises, Arno day trips or picnics. Charter boats include:

- Lemweio (25 ft Yamaha flat bottom) call John or Jenny at 625-2727
- Blue Bird (21 ft fiberglass) call Clyde Heine at 625-3369
- Mylanda (28 ft fiberglass Yamaha) call Clyde Heine at 625-8929
- Kirtake (37 ft Navy hull) call Marshalls Dive Adventures at 625-3483 or 625-3250 ext. 300
- XXXX (37 ft Navy hull) call Marshalls Dive Adventures at 625-3483 or 625-3250 ext. 300
- Jinekijj (26 ft Yamaha) call Marshalls Dive Adventures at 625-3483 or 625-3250 ext. 300
- MIMA (22 ft fiberglass) call Marshalls Dive Adventures at 625-3483 or 625-3250 ext. 300
- MEC Brits Too (22 ft Islander) call MEC at 625-3827-625-3828
- Uzie Q (26 ft Rinker) call Ken Kramer at 625-3122/625-0222
- Tees (20 ft Bayliner) call Dennis Reeder at 625-3602 or Melvin Aliven at 625-2626
- Lady Lu (45 ft Scarab) call James Bing at 625-3133/625-2447/247-8891/625-0723
- Ky-Lynne II (22 ft Yamaha) call Lazarus Andrike at 625-3174/625-3680/625-0603
- Dragon (24 ft Yamaha) call Rudy Aliven at 625-2626
- Loraine (35ft Bertram) Call Kenneth Kramer at 625-3122/625-0222
- Myoyo (23 ft fiberglass V-bottom) Call Nika at 625-0389
- Wildfire Charters call 625-1796, 625-2525-#142, hoddy63@hotmail.com or visit www.divemarshallislands.com
- Arianna (24ft Seahawk) call Rusin Abraham at 625-6637.

MARSHALLS BILLFISH CLUB

Since 1983, the Marshalls Billfish Club has been the biggest proponent of sport fishing in the Marshalls and Micronesia, organizing more than 140 sportsfishing tournaments. Currently, the Club holds an average of 10 tournaments a year, the largest tournaments being the Annual National Fisherman's Day Tournament held during the first week of July and the Mobil All-Micronesia Fishing Tournament held in August. These annual tournaments include two days of fishing and have participants from many neighboring Pacific Island countries.

Official Marshalls Billfish Club Tournament Records

www.billfishclub.com billfish@ntamar.net

| FISH TYPE | WEIGHT (lbs) |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| Billfish (Pacific Blue Marlin) | 719* |
| Tuna (Yellowfin) | 161 |
| Wahoo | 57 |
| Mahimahi | 44 |
| Barracuda | 42 |
| Bottom fish | 23 |

*July 2001 Tournament

World War II

During World War II, the Marshall Islands served as the eastern defensive perimeter for the Japanese military forces in the Central Pacific. After taking control of the Marshalls from Germany in 1914, the Japanese steadily increased their military presence here and beginning in the late 1930s with the anticipation of war, they began to heavily fortify the atolls of Kwajalein, Wotje, Maloelap, Jaluit and later Mili and Enewetak. These heavy fortifications were intended to help launch air attacks on certain targets (such as Hawaii, Wake Island, Kiribati and Johnston Atoll) and to serve as defense posts for Japan's more westerly strongholds.

The first attack on Japanese forces in the Marshalls by the US occurred in the early morning hours of February 1, 1942. The ensuing three years of fighting would prove to be some of the bloodiest in the whole of the Pacific. When the smoke cleared, what remained was an extravagant collection of war wrecks and relics unrivaled elsewhere in the Pacific.

The following is an approximate inventory of intact land-based relics in the Marshalls. These include air raid shelters, barracks, hospitals, storage tanks, power plants, tanks, trucks, trains, towers, anti-aircraft guns, coastal defense guns, multi-purpose guns, pillboxes, walls, trenches, air control centers, various bombers and fighters, runways, hangars and much more.

| Atoll | Land Relics |
|----------------|-------------|
| Maloelap | 215 |
| Jaluit | 104 |
| Wotje | 229 |
| Mili | 167 |

Escorted day-trips to Jaluit, Mili, Maloelap, and Wotje (former Japanese bases and areas of heavy fighting) are now available. For information, contact Marshall Islands Aquatics at 625-3669/6267 and ask for Matt Holly; Jaluit Tours, contact John Bungitak, 625-3035, rmiepa@ntamar.net.

Restaurants

Centrally located in the Pacific, Majuro also serves as the melting pot of international cuisine. Whether its Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Japanese, Indian, Western or local food that your taste buds are craving for, you can be assured that the selection of restaurants in Majuro atoll will be able to satisfy your palate. Just ask your hotel staff to point you in the right direction. Or, for a listing of some of the hot spots and off the beaten track local favorites, contact the Marshall Islands Visitors Authority at 625-(MIVA)/6482.

Bars and Nightclubs

Majuro offers a variety of local bars and nightclubs all over the downtown area with karaoke, billiards and some with shuffleboard. So, put on your dancing shoes and stop by The Pub, Long Island Club, Island Disco, or Club Lanai - the places to go, every weekend!!

Culture and History

GEOLOGICAL HISTORY

The Marshall Islands first emerged 70 million years ago when volcanic cores erupted at presently extinct hotspots south of the equator. Around 40 million years ago, while the Pacific plate continued to move in a northwesterly direction, the volcanoes began to subside. The islands were initially high, volcanic islands, but over the course of the ensuing 40 million years, they slowly sank back into the ocean from which they came, propelled by their own weight. Microscopic organisms called polyps, which thrive in warm waters with high salinity, salvaged the remaining rim of what was once a volcano to the extent that, with botanical seeds transported by birds and ocean currents, 3,000 years ago small islets had taken form on the reefs, capable of sustaining life. These islets formed circular rings encircling sheltered lagoons, namely our beautiful atolls we today can share with visitors.

PACIFIC COLONIZATION

The predominant theory on the colonization of the Pacific postulates that the initial settlers moved out of Southeast Asia, notably Southeast China and Formosa approximately 5,000 years ago. Over hundreds of years, and with successive advancements in maritime and agricultural technology, migration progressed southeastward along the northern coast of what is now New Guinea, then southeast into what are now the Melanesian island groups of Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and New Caledonia, and sometime between 2,000 to 3,000 years ago, into the Central Pacific: Fiji, Tonga, Samoa and probably Eastern Micronesia. According to linguists, the migrants who first moved out of Southeast Asia spoke in the Austronesian language family and today, nearly all languages in the Pacific are categorized as Austronesian. Over the last several decades, successive developments in different fields such as archaeology, linguistics and biology have shaped, strengthened and won general consensus on this theory.

MARSHALL ISLANDS COLONIZATION

The earliest radiocarbon tests from archaeological sites in the Marshalls generally cluster around the 2,000 years before present mark. This evidence suggests that the first signature of human occupation or activity in these islands occurred in and around the late B.C. or early A.D. period. While the exact settlement pattern that occurred within the Marshalls remains arguable, it is generally

agreed upon that the Marshall Islands were colonized from areas to the south and southwest. Linguistic, cultural and biological evidence links Marshallese with the Eastern Melanesia/Kiribati interaction area.

MARSHALLESE CULTURE

While dates and origins may still be arguable, the uniqueness of the culture which evolved on these islands is certain. Marshallese society was and for the most part, still is, stratified into three general classes: *Iroij* (chiefs), *Alap* (clan heads), and *Rijerbal* (workers). The *Iroij* have ultimate control of such things as land tenure, resource use and distribution, and dispute settlement. The *Alap*'s duties include maintenance of lands and supervision of daily activities. The *Rijerbal* are responsible for the daily work involved in subsistence, construction, agriculture, etc. In addition, land is divided into twelve categories, ranging from *Imon bwij*, land belonging to the whole lineage, to *Kitdre*, land given by a husband to his wife as a gift. Inheritance is matrilineal (passed through the mother).

UNIQUE CULTURAL SKILLS AND TECHNOLOGIES

Over the last 2,000 or so years, Marshallese have developed, refined and perfected a number of unique skills and technologies, all of which illustrated their keen adaptation to the atoll and oceanic environment.

Fishing technology, for instance, developed into one with very high specialization. The wide range of fishing environments coupled with the great variation in fish species led to a diverse and highly specialized range of fishing techniques. Few other cultures in the world have developed as many fishing techniques and styles as the Marshallese.

Marshallese canoes, or *wa*, which range from small rowing canoes to massive high-speed voyaging canoes have amazed Westerners from Otto Von Kotzebue, who visited the Marshalls in the early 1800s, to modern day world-class sailing enthusiasts. Marshallese canoes are recognized and revered throughout the Pacific for their advanced technical refinements, including the asymmetric hull, the lee platform, and the pivoting midship mast.



"Their canoes display the greatest ingenuity, and I have no doubt that in a 'civilized' country they would be ranked amongst the rarest specimens of human industry.... They move through the water with astonishing velocity, and in turning to windward, no boats can surpass them."

Captain of U.S. Schooner, *Dolphin* in 1824

*"Their sails consisted of finely braided mats, and were shaped with so much art, that even the closest sidewind could not fail to catch them. A canoe which left Ormed at the same time with us, sailed to our great astonishment, as fast as the *Rurick*."*

Otto Von Kotzebue, Captain of Russian vessel *Rurick*, *Voyage of Discovery*, 1820

Traditional Marshallese navigational skills were equally sophisticated. When the initial settlers of the Marshalls arrived, they were already equipped with complex navigational skills- otherwise, they could not have found their way to these low-lying islands. As time progressed, these skills were only sharpened. Ultimately, Marshallese learned to literally read nature's faint and subtle signs. Stars, clouds, waves, currents, winds, birds, and even the color of the ocean, bore recognizable clues which were easily read by trained navigators. These advancements in both maritime knowledge and canoe design allowed Marshallese to commonly sail as far as Hawaii to the east, Enenkio (Wake Island) to the north, Pohnpei to the west and Kiribati to the south.

While all islanders in the Pacific possessed some sort of navigational technology, Marshallese developed perhaps the most advanced methods of teaching this skill. Young apprentices spent much of their training "feeling" the waves beneath them as they lied on their backs in the ocean, in the process gaining the skill of "seeing" the island causing that wave pattern beneath them. In addition, navigational stick charts of various size and shape were devised to depicted complex wave and wind patterns in relation to individual islands, atolls and atoll groups. With these charts, elders were able to more easily explain and teach complex navigational concepts such as wave refraction and swell pattern identification.

Meanwhile, Marshallese woven craft have come to be known as the best in the Pacific. Fans, baskets, mats, ornaments, and the kili bag (made famous by Jackie Onassis) all come from the Marshalls and continue to win tremendous praise for their unique and highly intricate designs. Many creative forms of this time-honored craft can be seen in the more modern handicrafts.

COLONIAL HISTORY

The Marshall Islands possess a unique colonial history characterized by early contact with Westerners and a number of colonial regimes. The significant effects of this colonial history have contributed much to the shaping of the modern-day Marshall Islands.

Contact with the Western world occurred relatively early in these islands. The Spanish were the first Europeans to sail into and explore the Pacific (with Magellan landing on Guam in 1521) and during that century at least eight Spanish ships sailed through the Marshall Islands. During these brief early visits, the Marshallese became some of the first Pacific Islanders to establish contact and initiate trade with Westerners.

Foreign visits subsided over the next two centuries but quickly resumed in 1788 when British Captains Marshall and Gilbert sailed into the islands. These islands would later be named after Captain Marshall. Other British ships followed, including the *Brittania* in 1797, the *Rolla* in 1803 and the *Elizabeth* in 1809.

Following the British came the Russians, who visited the Marshalls aboard the *Rurik*, captained by Otto Von Kotzebue, throughout the years 1816 through 1823. The *Rurik's* crew, which included artist Ludwig Choris and naturalist Adelbert von Chamisso, conducted the first ever hydrographical, botanical, and ethnological studies on the Marshall Islands. Choris' artistic interpretations of the islands the *Rurik* visited are some of the earliest throughout the Pacific.

Whalers also visited the Marshalls during the early half of the 1800s but had ceased their whaling activities by 1850 mainly due to the introduction of kerosene which made whale oil obsolete.

In 1857, the first missionaries, from the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFDM), arrived from Honolulu with missionaries from both New England and Hawaii. Initially starting their work on the atoll of Ebon, the missionaries gradually branched out and by the end of the century they had established churches on almost every inhabited atoll. Today, Christianity and other forms of Western religion are an important part of Marshallese society.

Germans also entered the Marshalls during the 1850s, with Adolph Capelle, a German trader, arriving on Ebon from Samoa in 1859. Capelle was joined by Jose deBrum, a Portuguese, and together they built the first trading post in the Marshalls and also became the first Europeans to start families and live permanently here. Following Capelle and deBrum, several German firms began establishing themselves in the Marshalls. In 1885, two individual German trading firms merged to form the Jaluit Company which took on the dual role as trading company and colonial administrator. With the development of the Jaluit Company the Marshalls were finally declared a German protectorate with headquarters on Jabor, Jaluit.



When the First World War broke out 29 years into official German rule, Japan, which had joined the allies quickly after the beginning of war, sent naval squadrons into the Marshalls and took military possession of the islands in October of 1914. Japan began to increase its presence in the Marshalls with its population centered on Jaluit and Majuro. From these two atolls, the Japanese continued the work of the Jaluit Company, replacing it with the Nanyo Boeki Kaisha Company (NBK). In 1922, Japan was awarded Micronesia (including the Marshall Islands) as a Class "C" mandate by the League of Nations. When Japan withdrew from the League of Nations in 1933 it began military fortification of several atolls in the late 1930s.

After heavy fighting in the Pacific and especially in the Marshall Islands, the Japanese were defeated in the Second World War and the United States was the next major power to occupy the Marshalls. After the U.S. takeover in 1945, the U.S. Navy governed the Marshalls (in addition to the Northern Marianas, Palau, Yap, Chuuk and Pohnpei) and in 1947, the Marshalls were given by the United Nations to the U.S. as a Strategic Trust. In 1951, the administration of the Marshalls switched from the U.S. Navy to the Department of the Interior.

In the mid to late 1970s, while still under the U.S. Trust status, a growing sense of identity and desire for greater independence led the Marshall Islands to embark on an endeavor towards self-determination. This was ultimately manifested in 1986 through the Compact of Free Association, which transformed the country from a U.S. Trust to a freely associated nation, the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

Gifts and Souvenir Shopping

For a unique souvenir from the islands, we recommend visiting one of our handicraft shops. One visit and you'll know why Marshallese crafts are renown for their originality and fine artistic quality. Our mats, hats, model canoes, stick charts, baskets, and necklaces are all hand-made, of high quality and totally natural.

Lucky Star Club Airport 528-2828

ELEFA Club Airport 247-3059 wac_ma@hotmail.com

Am Mon Keke/Kora Im An Kil, Oceanside Delap, in back of Gibson's 625-5335

Busy Hands Club Assumption School 625-7440

Bank of the Marshall Islands Handicrafts Downtown Uliga 625-3636

Wut Konare Handicrafts Uliga next to Police Station 625-4879

You can also find Marshall Islands T-shirts, books, collectors' stamps and post cards and not to mention "Nin" (noni) juice, Arno Oils, Tobolar products, tuna jerky and more at various locations around Majuro. Stop by any of the following to purchase these items: RRE, Midtown Shop, Payless, Alele Museum, Post Offices, Outrigger Gift Shop, Marshalls Dive Adventures dive shop and RRE Long Island Grocery.

Things to See and Do on Majuro Atoll

Marshalls Dive Adventures Dive, snorkel, picnic or tour the best spots around Majuro and Arno atolls with MDA (courses and rental gear available). Call 625-3483 or 625-3250 for reservations.

Bako Divers Explore the underwater world with Bako Divers. Scuba, snorkel, lagoon cruise and picnic tours offered (courses and rental gear available). Call Jerry at the Outrigger, Room #140 (tel 625-2525).

Yokwe Divers Scuba adventures, snorkeling, lagoon cruises, picnics, fishing charters, and more. Gear also available for rent. Call Darryl or Julie at 625-1496, 625-2525-#142, hody63@hotmail.com.

Kirt Pinho's Sunday Enemanet Picnic See up close some of the 40 other islands in Majuro's lagoon on your way to the perfect picnic spot. Call Kirt at 625-3269/5469 to sign on.

Kidenen Island Tours Camp out overnight or spend the day at this secluded coral island, across the lagoon. Kayak, snorkel, barbecue or just hang out! Call Joe or John at 625-3251 or 625-7318.

Laura Lagoon Tours Snorkel over a sunken WWII bomber, or spend the day on an uninhabited island in Majuro's secluded westside. Call Terry Sasser at 528-2404.

Seven Seas Yacht Cruises What's the best way to relax on a coral atoll? Take an evening sunset cruise or a half-day picnic trip aboard the sailing yacht Carmen. Refreshments included. Call 625-2445 for reservations.

Kaimana Lagoon Cruises Take a day to sit back, relax, and spend your day afloat in "paradise". Offering daytrips and sunset cruises for up to 10 people. Refreshments included. Contact Ron or Liz at 455-0745 for reservations.

Customized Charter Boat Tours Customize your own half or full-day tour with one of Majuro's many charter boat operators. Charters available for fishing, lagoon cruises, Arno day trips or picnics (to arrange for a charter call Marshalls Dive Adventures, the RRE Hotel front desk at 625-3250; Bako Divers, Yokwe Divers at the Outrigger at 625-2525, or the Marshalls Billfish Club at 625-7491).

Canoes of the Marshall Islands (WAAN AELON IN MAJOL) Learn about Marshallese canoe construction and sailing at the Waan Aelon in Majol canoe house, located near the Outrigger. Visit the canoe house during normal working hours (M-F) and you'll find several canoe builders working on various canoe types. Ask for Alson or Dennis for a quick bwebwenato (chat) 625-6123.

Laura Beach Park Located at the western end of Majuro is Laura Beach Park, a popular picnic site. Here you'll find a sandy beach, picnic areas, and a fresh water shower. Visitors are recommended to rent a car to visit Laura (about 1 hour drive from town). The \$1 entry fee is used for cleanup and maintenance.

Alele Museum Learn more about Marshallese tradition and history at Alele, which features authentic tools and artifacts, traditional canoe displays, original photos from the Joachim deBrum collection and more. Located in downtown Majuro, open M-F 9AM-12PM and 1PM-4PM. Call Alele at 625-3372 for more information.

RRE Clam Farm RRE's giant-clam holding and raising facility, which features a number of different species and sizes of giant clams (for the aquarium market). Visitors are welcomed, call 625-CLAM for a short guided tour.

Tobolar Copra Processing Plant The first real economic mainstay of most Pacific Islanders, including Marshallese, was copra production (copra is the dried out meat of coconuts). Today,

copra production remains an important source of income for locals and at the Tobolar Copra Processing Plant, you can see copra made into coconut oil, soaps, body oil, and coconut feed. For a quick tour, call 625-3116.

Handicraft Shopping Majuro is the best place to shop for the hand-made, all-natural and all-original Marshallese handicrafts. Wut Konare, Busy Hands Club and Leipajid (all near the Assumption Church), Am Mon Keke (behind Payless), and smaller stands at the airport, offer "Amimono" from all over the Marshall Islands.

General Shopping Easily find original Marshall Islands T-shirts, the latest books and magazines, post cards, designer fashion wear, and more. Merely walking down the street opens up the opportunities!

Night Life Select from a variety of karaoke bars, dance clubs, and bars as you enjoy an evening out with the friendly locals. Live music during the weekends at various bars and clubs!

Restaurants Looking for Mexican, Chinese, Vietnamese, Japanese, or local cuisine? Want to catch the big game while enjoying a pizza? Interested in fine dining with the sunset as your backdrop? A quick takeout? Majuro has it all.

Peace Park Memorial Located just past the airport towards Laura, this memorial park constructed by the Japanese government commemorates the soldiers who fought and died in the Pacific during WWII.

1918 Typhoon Monument Typhoons are quite rare in the Marshalls, but in 1918 a big one struck the southern atolls and Majuro was especially damaged. The typhoon caused over 200 casualties and widespread destruction. The 1918 Typhoon Monument, a large sandstone upright on the lagoon-side dirt road at the end of Laura, commemorates the victims of the typhoon and pays homage to the Japanese Emperor for his generous contribution of private funds for rebuilding Majuro.

Wallace Movie Theaters Got a free evening? Catch a movie at Wallace Theaters (at Payless Compound). For 24-hour movie information, call 625-5615.

Majuro Bowl Bowling on Majuro? You bet. At Majuro Bowl, located downtown, you'll find 10 shiny lanes, shoes and lockers for rent, electronic score keeping, and great food. Call 625-3797 for more information.

Marshalls Billfish Club Tournaments About once a month, you can witness one of the more popular events on Majuro, a fishing tournament. You'll see a variety of fish being weighed in as numerous anglers compete for the prizes. These fish include blue marlin, yellowfin tuna, skipjack, mahimahi, wahoo, baracuda, and scores of reef fish. For tournament dates, or just to consult with the experts, contact the Marshalls Billfish Club at 625-7491.

Arno Excursion Just an hour away awaits the atoll of Arno. Tour the pearl farm, dive your hearts delight, relax to B&B accommodations, bike across jungles, listen to the sound of waves breaking along miles of sandy beach, or ride them! The perfect place for a quick or extended get-away.

Mili Excursion Two hours away are the picturesque islands of Mili Atoll. Pristine nature, WWII exploration tours, spectacular diving, and your own bungalow. The ultimate outer island experience.

Church Services

| | | |
|-------------------------------|----------|--------------------------------------|
| ◆ Assembly of God | Sunday | 10:20am / 7:00pm |
| ◆ Assumption (Catholic) | Saturday | 6:30pm English |
| | Sunday | 7:30am / 9:30am |
| ◆ Bahai | Sunday | 11:00am |
| ◆ Congregational | Sunday | 10:30am / 5:30pm |
| ◆ Jehovah's Witnesses | Sunday | 9:00am / 3:00pm |
| ◆ Laura Baptist Church | Sunday | 10:30am / 5:00pm |
| ◆ Majuro English Church | Sunday | 9:30am English |
| ◆ Church of Latter Day Saints | Sunday | 10:00am/11:00am |
| ◆ Rita Protestant Church | Sunday | 9:30am English / 10:30am Marshallese |
| ◆ Salvation Army | Sunday | 11:00am / 7:00pm |
| ◆ Seventh Day Adventist | Saturday | 11:00am |
| ◆ Uliga Protestant Church | Sunday | 10:30am / 6:00pm |

Public Holidays and Annual Events

(DATES OF ANNUAL EVENTS APPROXIMATE)

| | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| *New Year's Day | January 1 |
| *Memorial and Nuclear Victim's Day | March 1 |
| Coconut Cup Sailing Regatta | 1st Saturday in April |
| *Good Friday | April |
| *Constitution Day | May 1 |
| Constitution Day Sporting Events and Parade | May 1 |
| Outrigger Marshall Is Cup Traditional Canoe Race | 1st weekend in May |
| *Fisherman's Day | 1st Friday in July |
| Marshalls Billfish Club Annual Tournament | 1st weekend in July |
| *Rijerbal (worker's) Day | 1st Friday in Sept |
| Mobil All Micronesia Fishing Tournament | 1st weekend in September |
| *Manit (custom) Day | Last Friday in September |
| Custom Day Activities (Lutok Koppan Alele) | Last Friday in September |
| *President's Day | November 17 |
| *Gospel Day | 1st Friday in December |
| *Christmas Day | December 25 |
| Chamber of Commerce Christmas Parade | 1st or 2nd Saturday in December |
| * Public Holidays | |

Internet Access

Tourist Trap \$1 access fee and \$.10 a minute. M-F 9AM-5PM. Sat 9-12PM.

Outrigger Marshall Islands Resort \$3 per half hour, 24hr. access, hotel lobby

Hotel Robert Reimers \$5 per half hour, 24 hr. access, hotel lobby

National Telecommunications Authority \$.08 per minute, 24hr. access @ Delap Headquarters

Revised August 2003

